

Phalen Corridor Initiative Report: Summary of Big Communities Meetings - March 1999

Conducted on behalf of the Phalen Corridor Initiative
Prepared by
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Executive Summary

Phalen Corridor Initiative Draft Report: Summary of Big Community Meetings — March 1999

The Phalen Corridor Initiative (PCI) is a comprehensive community development project in the East Side neighborhood of Saint Paul, Minnesota. With a focus on job creation to foster economic revitalization, PCI is bringing improvements in employment opportunities, light industry development, housing (both new and rehabilitated), transportation, green space creation, brownfield remediation, and support to existing retail businesses. As part of a continued consultation process with area community groups, PCI held a set of three “Big Community Meetings” to collect detailed opinions from them on land-use along PCI. One of the three meetings were held in each of the area planning districts. Provisions were made for English, Hmong and Spanish speakers to participate. The City of Saint Paul plans to use the information from these meetings to complete the *Phalen Corridor Initiative Development Strategy*, detailing the land-use plans within the boundaries of this project –Saint Paul’s East Side. The chart below provides a summary of the results of these three meetings:

At each Big Community Meeting, area residents were asked to participate in small group discussions where they expressed comments and concerns about PCI and the tentative land-use plans. The participants were then asked to identify their top three issues discussed. As scoring system used in this process helped to produce the chart above. All comments that had at least one point were given assigned a category including:

- THE BOULEVARD: Comments distinctly related to the future Phalen Boulevard
- COMMERCIAL: Issues relating to retail, small businesses, etc., in the relevant area
- THE CORRIDOR: Discussion points addressing PCI as a whole
- Employment: All issues that correspond to wages, jobs, and work opportunities
- GREEN SPACE: Comments and ideas associated with developing green areas
- HOUSING: Recommendations for PCI developers in the process of working to help residents rebuild the quality of housing in the area, and develop new housing
- INDUSTRY: Comments on the development and redevelopment of industrial sites
- PROCESS: Issues regarding who PCI may consider changes in the process of consulting with community members
- SAFETY: Comments on how to insure safety in the development of PCI, and how this might spill-over into neighboring communities

As you can see in the chart and table on the following page, the top five categories for the Big Community Meetings were 1) HOUSING, 2) EMPLOYMENT, 3) THE CORRIDOR, 4) THE BOULEVARD, and 5) INDUSTRY.

Chart 1: Big Community Meeting Results

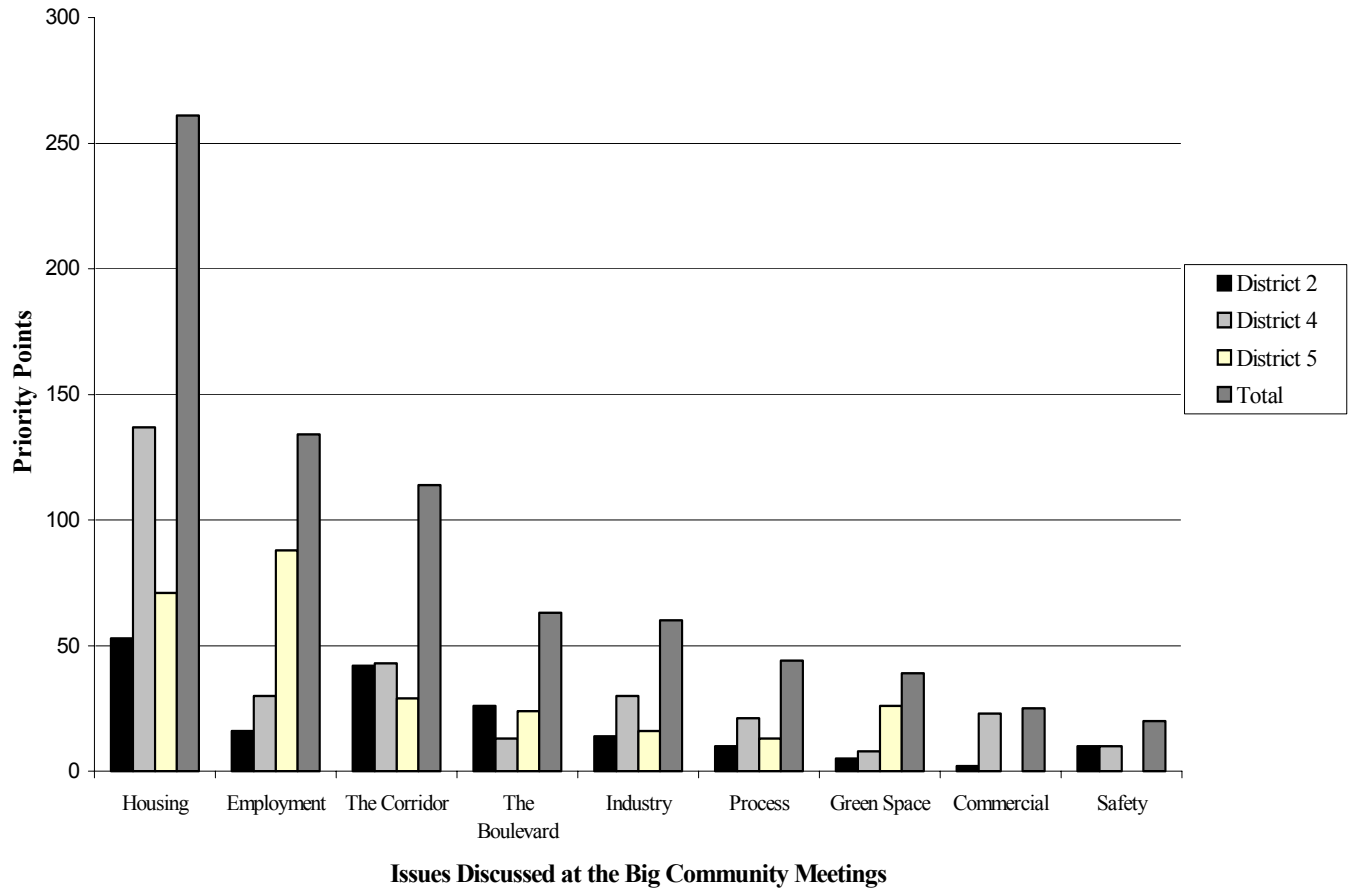


Table 1: Big Community Meetings – Priority Points

	District 2	District 4	District 5	Total
Housing	53	137	71	261
Employment	16	30	88	134
The Corridor	42	43	29	114
The Boulevard	26	13	24	63
Industry	14	30	16	60
Process	10	21	13	44
Green Space	5	8	26	39
Commercial	2	23	0	25
Safety	10	10	0	20

Comparison with Previously Collected Data

It is possible to compare these results with the former Neighborhood Meetings Report¹ and see how community members opinions have changed or remained the same regarding PCI. Before comparing these data, it is important to mention that the community members who attended the Big Community Meetings may reside closer to the future Phalen Boulevard and other future effected areas than those who attended the Neighborhood Meetings. This difference could have had an impact on the following comparisons. HOUSING appears to have taken a major jump from #5 in the previous report to #1 in this report. Issues related to the BOULEVARD also appear to be drawing more attention. Interest in GREEN SPACE may be receiving a little less attention for the time being, while issues related to EMPLOYMENT, THE CORRIDOR, and INDUSTRY remained fairly consistent. Similar changes in priorities were also present when comparing these data at the district level. With these results, PCI planners may wish to direct slightly more interest in these areas of growing community concern.

Neighborhood Meetings Report Results

1. Employment
2. Corridor
3. Industry
4. Green Space
5. Housing

Big Community Meetings Results

1. Housing
2. Employment
3. The Corridor
4. The Boulevard
5. Industry

Upon approval by the Phalen Corridor Steering Committee, the executive summary of this report was sent to those who attended the Big Community Meeting and provided their addresses, and for the planning district councils. The full report is available to anyone upon request. The final draft of the *Development Strategy* will be presented to a smaller group of area residents in the late Summer or early Fall 1999, and then before the City Council early this summer for approval.

¹ Gormley, K. (1999). *Phalen Corridor Initiative Report: Summary of Neighborhood Meetings*. Phalen Corridor Initiative: St. Paul, Minnesota.

Phalen Corridor Initiative Report: Summary of Big Community Meetings — March 1999

Introduction

The Phalen Corridor Initiative (PCI) is a comprehensive community development project in the East Side neighborhood of Saint Paul, Minnesota. With a focus on job creation to foster economic revitalization, PCI is bringing improvements in employment opportunities, light industry development, housing (both new and rehabilitated), transportation, green space creation, brownfield remediation, and support to existing retail businesses.

PCI is directed by a steering committee comprised of representatives from 60 public and private agencies that are active and interested in the development of Saint Paul's East Side. The steering committee has supported and engaged in a community consultation process throughout 1998, and into 1999. The consultation process includes informational meetings with small community groups², focus group meetings to gain community members' opinions on preliminary land-use decisions³, and most recently the big community meetings. These most recent meetings were held to collect more detailed community members' opinions on land-use along PCI. The City of Saint Paul plans to use the information from these meetings (as summarized in this report) to complete the *Phalen Corridor Initiative Development Strategy*, detailing the land-use plans within the boundaries of this project – Saint Paul's East Side.

Method for Collecting Data

Three "Big Community Meetings" were held throughout March 1999. While anyone could attend any of the meetings, one was held in one of the three of the city planning districts that will be most impacted by PCI:

March 18, 1999	Harding High School	District 2
March 23, 1999	Metropolitan State University	District 4
March 30, 1999	American Legion Hall	District 5

For the specifics that went into planning for these meetings, contact the PCI office, 506 Kenny Road, St. Paul, MN 55101.⁴ It is worth mentioning that a considerable amount of publicity went into drawing people to these meetings including an 8000 piece mass-mailed invitation that was sent to most East Siders. This mailing went to all residences and businesses within the following boundaries: South of Maryland Avenue, East of Interstate 35E and the railroad track below in Dayton's Bluff, North of Interstate 94 (south side of Dayton's Bluff), and from several blocks East of Johnson Parkway and to the West. This mailing area included 14 to 18 blocks South of the future Phalen

² Gormley, K. (1999). *Phalen Corridor Initiative Report: Summary of Neighborhood Meetings*. Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota: Minneapolis, MN.

³ Gormley, K. (1999). *Phalen Corridor Initiative Report: Summary of Focus Group Meetings*. Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota: Minneapolis, MN.

⁴ Carothers, K. (1999). *March Madness 1999*. Phalen Corridor Initiative: St. Paul, Minnesota.

Boulevard, 8 to 13 blocks to the north, 0 blocks West (Phalen Boulevard will end at I-35E), and 2-3 blocks to the East. The flyers for these events were delivered in English, Spanish, and Hmong. In addition, all community groups/church groups that participated in Neighborhood Meetings were also invited.

All three meetings were open to anyone interested in attending. Nevertheless, the majority of those present were from the city planning district where the meeting was held. No census of those who attended was taken, yet there also appeared to be low representation of people of color, and tenants of rental properties. The challenge to attract these audiences is not particular to PCI, but occurs among most development efforts throughout the metropolitan area that are seeking to obtain residents' opinions and feedback.

Data for this report were residents' comments collected at the big meetings during small group breakout sessions. Each big community assembly was divided into English, Hmong, and Spanish speaking groups. Area pastors and seminary students facilitated English speaking groups. All facilitators were provided with a brief training session to prepare them for the small group sessions (See Appendix I). Hmong and Spanish speaking groups were facilitated by fluent area residents or community service specialists. The facilitators asked the residents a series of questions encompassing the entire PCI:

- What do you like about the land-use plan?
- What don't you like about the land-use plan?
- What is missing? Are there any changes you would like to make to the land use plan?

Note that in District 4, the English speaking groups were divided to discuss either the western, central, or eastern sections of PCI.

Each facilitator wrote all the responses from their group discussion on large flip-chart paper in front of the group. After 20 to 30 minutes of discussing the questions above, the group was asked to wrap up their discussion by having each individual select their first, second, and third most important issues from the items written on the flip chart: 3 points for most important, 2 points from second most important, and 1 point for third most important. The facilitator wrote down the scores next to the item on the flip chart. Once all group members had given their scores, the facilitator added the points to determine the top five issues for the group. This was effective for two main reasons:

1. Ranking was not done by group consensus and therefore allowed for individuals' differences.
2. A smaller group's results did not weigh more than those of a larger one because each person in a group was given 6 points to express their opinions (3 points for their first priority, 2 points for their second priority, and 1 point for their third priority).

Nearly every one of the English speaking groups had an additional person taking notes to supplement the data collected by the facilitator. This information was used only for complementing the data from the groups.

Method of Data Analysis

Group members' comments that received one or more priority points were included in this report. Only these comments were considered to be of higher priority to the group members, and therefore used as source data in the analysis stage of this report. Furthermore, the points for Hmong speaking groups were doubled to weigh their results more heavily in this report. Only one Spanish speaking person offered her top three priorities. This person's points were also doubled.⁵

Each item discussed by a group that was given one or more points was coded according to the "discussion categories" used in the previous two reports:

- THE BOULEVARD: Comments distinctly related to the future Phalen Boulevard
- COMMERCIAL: Issues relating to retail, small businesses, and restaurants in the relevant area
- THE CORRIDOR: Discussion points addressing PCI as a whole
- EMPLOYMENT: All issues that correspond to wages, jobs, and work opportunities
- GREEN SPACE: Comments associated with concerns and ideas for developing for green areas
- HOUSING: Recommendations for PCI developers in the process of working to help residents rebuild the quality of housing in the area, and develop new housing
- INDUSTRY: Discussion points that mention industrial sites and their interests in the development of the PCI
- PROCESS: Issues that PCI staff and others should consider in the process of consulting the community
- SAFETY: Comments on how to insure safety in the development of PCI, and how this might spill-over into neighboring communities

Group members' comments were then assembled per "discussion category" allowing a preview of how many points were collected for each category. This analysis was used to find the five largest categories per meeting and individual comments that generated the greatest number of points irrespective of how they were coded.

Results

With all of this information, we have a list that infers the top 5 categories and the top five comments (irrespective of category) for each meeting, and for the entire series of three meetings.⁶ With this information, it was possible to deduce which of the categories and comments were most important to area residents.

Also in this report is a comparison with the result for the Neighborhood Meetings Report (See footnote #1) that also inferred a list of priorities per district and for the entire East Side.

⁵ It may prove profitable to identify the opinions of other minority groups including African Americans in future consultation sessions with neighborhood residents. The data for this most recent set of meetings were only divided by language groups: English, Hmong, and Spanish.

⁶ Only for the District 4 meeting were the results reported per group, because their groups divided to discuss distinct sections of PCI (east, central, west).

District 2 Big Community Meeting March 18, 1999

The first Big Community Meeting was held at Harding Junior High School in District 2 (D2), and had an attendance of over 60 area residents, community activists, and other interested parties. Only about 40 of the attendees participated in the 7 small group discussions (5 English, 1 Hmong, and 1 Spanish). The priorities per particular group are not included with these findings because there is nothing distinct about the groups' discussions – Each group spoke about PCI as a whole and did not focus on any particular part of the Corridor. Point values that were doubled from the Hmong or Spanish speaking groups are highlighted in bold. Note that the top five independent comments originate from the category listing and therefore appear twice.

D2: The Top Five (plus 1) Independent Comments

The following comments were the #1 priorities for the English and Hmong groups:

1. Buffer areas: Don't want to look out back [my] window and see [a] plant. [Have them] set back [or have] park [buffers]. 10 points. Category – CORRIDOR
2. Johnson from 7th to Case needs up-grading. Include in project. Dumpy looking – poor housing & railroad bridge ugly. 10 points. Category – CORRIDOR
3. Housing: Why tear down housing when you could just build farther back? 10 points. Category – HOUSING (existing)
4. Phalen Blvd. A plus for traffic movement 10 points. Category – BOULEVARD
5. Jobs in the area - e.g., information technology [jobs], good pay – arrange for training for those jobs other than manufacturing jobs. 10 points. Category – EMPLOYMENT
6. Like to walk to work **10 points.** Category – INDUSTRY

D2: Top Five Categories

I. HOUSING **TOTAL – 53 points**

Comments on existing housing, and new housing, and related changes

Existing Housing (44 points)

- Housing: Why tear down housing when you could just build farther back? (10 points)
- Residential relocation?? Need to hear residents give options/concern. (8 points)
- [Deal with] absentee owners (5 points)
- What happens to house[s]? (5 points)
- Tax break or subsidy or low-interest loans for home improvements. (3 points)
- Would the city buy the property at 873 Newcomb? (**6 points**)
- When would the property be bought? (**4 points**)
- What price would be paid? (**2 points**)
- What would be the effect on property values in the mean time and would landlords and residents be compensated for a drop due to the Initiative? (1 point)
- New Housing (9 points)
- Housing: Number [of units to be] torn down, Number [of units to be] going up. (8 points)
- Price range on new housing – affordable? (1 point)

II. THE CORRIDOR

TOTAL – 42 points

Issues related to the development of PCI

- Buffer areas: Don't want to look out back window and see plant. [Have them] set back [or have] park [buffers]. (10 points)
- Johnson from 7th to Case needs up-grading. Include in project. Dumpy looking – poor housing & railroad bridge ugly. (10 points)
- [Thumbs down for] light rail (8 points)
- Time frame: 10 years, 15 years, 20 years? (5 points)
- Improving Bush Street (Payne to Desoto): Housing & businesses (3 points)
- Who pays for development if business doesn't come? (3 points)
- Sound volume control – Blvd. (2 points)
- Like investments and dollars. (1 point)

III. THE BOULEVARD

TOTAL – 26 points

- Phalen Blvd. A plus for traffic movement (10 points)
- Make transportation to work shorter/easier (**6 points**)
- Transportation (5 points)
- Parking (shuttle busses) (employees, businesses) (3 points)
- Adequate ramping for trucks & buses, commuters onto/off 35E. (2 points)

IV. EMPLOYMENT

TOTAL – 16 points

- Jobs in the area - e.g., information technology [jobs], good pay – arrange for training for those jobs other than manufacturing jobs. (10 points)
- Create more jobs for East Siders & Maintain [the area for] more people to live on East Side. (**6 points**)

V. INDUSTRY

TOTAL – 14 points

Issues related to the design of new sites and development of existing underused sites

- Like to walk to work (**10 points**)
- Assembly/light industrial will help Hmong (non-English [speaking]) to get job[s] easier. (**2 points**)
- Brewery: Jobs, need to look at [jobs here] (2 points)

The remaining categories and the corresponding comments not listed above are also important to mention and may be important to consider in PCI planning:

SAFETY

TOTAL - 10 points

- Safety/Access (8 points)
- Safety (2 points)

PROCESS

TOTAL - 10 points

- Promote new image of ESP [?] (8 points)
- Unhappy with PCI: Say they involved [with residents] or not following the correct process as used in other development projects. (2 points)

GREEN SPACE

TOTAL - 5 points

- Greening – cleanup (5 points)

COMMERCIAL

TOTAL - 2 points

- Commercial fitting in with residential (1 points)
- Jerry's Foods (Ames) should go: [The] milk's poor. Eye sore. Takes away from work on wetland. (1 points)

D2: Comparison to Previous Study

Now it is possible to consider how these results compare to the study based on meetings with small community groups in District 2 from May 1998 to October 1999:

Neighborhood Meetings – D2		Big Community Meeting – D2
<u>Priority</u>	<u>Discussion Categories</u>	<u>Categories</u>
1.	Boulevard	Housing
2.	Employment	Corridor
3.	Green space	Boulevard
4.	Industry	Employment
5.	Corridor	Industry

HOUSING was not among the top five categories of District 2 in the Neighborhood Meetings Report⁷, but now may be the most important issue in the area. CORRIDOR, BOULEVARD, EMPLOYMENT and INDUSTRY remain consistent in the top five. GREEN SPACE drops out of the top five. Again, it is recommended to consider that these differences may have occurred in part because the population of those who attended the most recent meetings may reside closer to PCI and future affected areas.

⁷ Housing was the #6 priority item in this report for District 2.

District 4 Big Community Meeting March 23, 1999

The second Big Community Meeting was held at Metropolitan State University in District 4 (D4) and had an attendance of over 90 area residents, community activists, and other interested parties. Approximately 80 of the attendees participated in the 7 small group discussions (6 English⁸ and 1 Hmong). The Dayton's Bluff/District 4 Planning Council asked that the small group discussions be designated by area. This was only possible with the English speaking groups because other language groups were too small in number. Therefore, two groups were assigned to discuss the Eastern area of PCI which is otherwise known as Ross-Reaney or 7th & Atlantic. Two more groups were divided to discuss the central area otherwise known as the Stroh area. One group was assigned to discuss the western area including Williams Hill, the East Consolidated Neighborhood (ECON), and USA Waste. The Hmong speaking group and a small English speaking group discussed the entire development area.

The results for this meeting include as in the previous, the top five individual comments, the top five categories, and a comparison with the results from the Neighborhood Meetings Report. In addition will be a description of the top five categories per the area discussion groups: East, Central, and West. Again, point values that were doubled from the Hmong speaking group are highlighted in bold. Also, the top five independent comments originate from the category listing and therefore appear twice.

D4: The Top Five Independent Comments

1. Concern about town homes – replacing houses – will there be other houses.
21 points. Category – HOUSING (new)
2. Housing changes? Those moving be able to find new housing - affordable? What plan for low income?
18 points. Category – HOUSING (new)
3. Up to what specific area/street that will be affected by the project?
16 points. Category – CORRIDOR
4. We need to educate the Hmong population in the East Side about the project: What, where, why when? Special session for the Hmong.
16 points. Category – PROCESS
5. Houses taken away on Newcomb/E. 7th. What about long term homeowners?
15 points. Category – HOUSING (existing)

⁸ There were no Spanish speaking residents at the meeting. Therefore, the Spanish speaking facilitator worked with a small group of English speaking residents who wanted to speak about PCI as a whole.

D4: Top Five Categories

I. HOUSING **TOTAL – 137 points**

Issues on existing housing, and new housing, and related changes:

Existing Housing (82 points)

- Housing: Concern about present residents: Will they be displaced? Will there be adequate housing? Remodeling? Concern about multiple dwelling houses. Concern about town homes – replacing houses – will there be other houses (21 points)
- Houses taken away on Newcomb/E. 7th. What about long term homeowners? (15 points)
- Current housing in this neighborhood should stay (11 points)
- Property taxes/assessments (10 points)
- Need to know the resource to help improve housing condition. **(8 points)**
- Won't upgrade housing (drug houses, prostitution, bad landlords) (7 points)
- Will this development effect ability to sell home in interim? (7 points)
- Property values (2 points)
- Will taxes go up for residents? (1 point)

New Housing (55 points)

- Housing changes? Those moving be able to find new housing - affordable? What plan for low income? (18 points)
- If begin relocated/moved, will you find a new home/pay for it? What about the people who rent? **(12 points)**
- Senior housing/cottages – not high-rise (7 points)
- Gentrification/Costs/resident and homeowner returns (7 points)
- Housing density and affordability (6 points)
- Displacement of families – housing (Wells and east of Stroh) (5 points)

II. THE CORRIDOR **TOTAL – 43 points**

- Up to what specific area/street that will be affected by the project? **(16 points)**
- Improve looks of area (7 points)
- Public art where possible (6 points)
- More immediate need for lighting on Minnehaha [Avenue] (5 points)
- Match design to neighborhood (4 points)
- Parking ramps not lots (3 points)
- How this will effect the schools (2 point)
- Schedule of plan (1 point)
- Project stalled – guarantee of completion (1 point)

III. EMPLOYMENT **TOTAL – 30 points**

Comments about new jobs, job retention, and wages (not about industrial design)

- What kind of job/pay range? Are these limited to the East Siders? **(12 points)**
- How different from other St. Paul developments? Promise of jobs? (8 points)
- Anticipation of jobs (5 points)
- Bring jobs to area and better ones (2 points)
- Not living wages (1 points)
- Where are the companies coming from? Are they new jobs or relocation? Who is monitoring compliance? (1 points)
- Will they pay well (1 points)

IV. INDUSTRY **TOTAL – 30 points**

Issues related to the design of new sites and development of existing underused sites (not about issues of employment)

- How keep existing businesses? (10 points)
- Create homeless area in industrial area (9 points)

- Keep Stroh Brewery structurally in tact historical value – It is the feel of the neighborhood. [A group member latter stood up claiming that this was the highest priority in spite of the results]. (5 points)
- How will businesses be attracted? (3 points)
- Reuse of Stroh (2 points)
- Keep present owner of the brewery until sold (1 points)

V. COMMERCIAL

TOTAL – 23 points

- Seeger's Square needs improvement (13 points)
- Business rehab (10 points)

Other categories that did not rate as high overall, may contain interesting information for current or future planners in the area:

PROCESS

TOTAL – 21 points

- We need to educate the Hmong population in the East Side about the project: What, where, why, when? Special session for the Hmong. **(16 points)**
- Honesty of whole redevelopment/information (5 points)

THE BOULEVARD

TOTAL – 13 points

- Why is the new road necessary for development? (7 points)
- Traffic escape route from freeway (4 points)
- Maintenance of roads (1 point)
- Extend road to St. Croix to really build industry. (1 point)

SAFETY

TOTAL – 10 points

- Better police protection (9 points)
- Effect on crime (1 point)

GREEN SPACE

TOTAL – 8 points

- Greater control – planning for drainage and reforestation. Green Corridor/Greater covenants (private green space, best place for drainage/reforestation) (4 point)
- Clean wooded areas (3 point)
- Swede Hollow (1 point)

D4: Comparison to Previous Study

Now it is possible to consider how the results listed above compared to those findings for District 4 found in the Neighborhood Meetings Report:

Neighborhood Meetings – D4		Big Community Meeting – D4	
<u>Priority Discussion Categories</u>		<u>Categories</u>	
1.	Housing		Housing
2.	Corridor		Corridor
3.	Employment		Employment
4.	Industry	Industry	
5.	Green Space		Commercial

It is engaging to see how the interests have remained consistent in District 4. All of the priorities remained the same except the last one where COMMERCIAL interests were #10 in the previous report and now has moved up the number #5.

GREEN SPACE may have plummeted to last place due to growing interest in these top five area.⁹ Note that there may have been differences in the populations that attended the Neighborhood Meetings and the Big Community Meetings. These differences may have also influenced the change in these priorities.

D4: Top Five Independent Comments from the Area Groups

The English speaking group participants were asked join one of the following small discussion groups – East End (7th and Atlantic), Central (Stroh), West End (Williams Hill, USA Waste, ECON). Based on anticipated interest, two discussion groups were provided for both the east and central areas, while one was provided for the west area. The following findings represent the top five independent comments (i.e., not categorized) for the three sections of PCI.

7th & Atlantic Groups' Top Five

1. Houses taken away on Newcomb and E. 7th. What about long term homeowners?
15 points. Category – HOUSING (existing)
2. Business rehab.
10 points. Category – COMMERCIAL
3. Property taxes/assessments
10 points. Category – HOUSING (existing)
4. How different from other St. Paul developments? Promise of jobs?
8 points. Category – EMPLOYMENT

⁹ See the Table in the Summary section of this report for a listing of all categories per district.

5. [Seven (7) points each.]
 - a. Gentrification/Costs/resident and homeowner returns. Category – HOUSING (new)
 - b. Why is the new road necessary for development? Category – BOULEVARD
 - c. Will this development effect ability to sell home in interim? Category – HOUSING (existing)

Stroh Groups' Top Five

1. Housing: Concern about present residents: Will they be displaced? Will there be adequate housing? Remodeling? Concern about multiple dwelling houses. Concern about town homes – replacing houses – will there be other houses? 21 points. Category – HOUSING (existing)
2. Housing changes? Those moving be able to find new housing - affordable? What plan for low income? 18 points. Category – HOUSING (new)
3. Seeger's Square needs improvement 13 points. Category – COMMERCIAL
4. Current housing in this neighborhood should stay. 11 points. Category – HOUSING (existing)
5. How keep existing businesses [i.e., industry]? 10 points. Category – INDUSTRY

West End Group's Top Five

1. Better police protection. 9 points. Category – SAFETY
2. Create homeless area in industrial area. 9 points. Category – INDUSTRY
3. Improve looks of area. 7 points. Category – CORRIDOR
4. [This plan] won't upgrade housing (drug houses, prostitution, bad landlords). 7 points. Category – HOUSING (existing)
5. Traffic escape route from freeway. 4 points. Category – TRANSIT

These group specific results demonstrate that the Stroh groups focused almost entirely on housing. The 7th and Atlantic groups also concentrated on housing, but a little less than the Stroh group. The West End group expressed a broad range of interests with an emphasis on Safety.

District 5 Big Community Meeting March 30, 1999

The third Big Community Meeting was held at the American Legion in District 5 (D5), and had an attendance of over 100 area residents, community activists, and other interested parties. Nearly all of the attendees participated in the 5 “small” group discussions (4 English and 1 Hmong¹⁰). The word “small” is in quotation marks here because some of the groups had as many as 30 people. In one of these groups, the facilitator asked the note taker to abandon her role as recorder in order to write the comments from the group on the flip chart. All groups for this meeting discussed the entire development area.

The results for this meeting will include as in the previous, the top five individual comments, the top five categories, and a comparison with the results from the Neighborhood Meetings Report. Again, point values that were doubled from the Hmong speaking group are highlighted in bold.

D5: The Top Five Independent Comments

1. What businesses are moving in? New or existing?
30 points. Category – INDUSTRY
2. How many houses will be torn down? Will they be replaced? Where? (How will we keep residents from moving from the East Side?)
25 points. Category – HOUSING (new)
3. Jobs
24 points. Category – EMPLOYMENT
4. Traffic → How will it effect existing neighborhood? Will there be a lot of noise?
20 points. Category – BOULEVARD
5. Jobs for East Siders, not job-hoppers from other communities.
9 points. Category – EMPLOYMENT

D5: Top Five Categories

I. EMPLOYMENT **TOTAL – 88 points**

- What businesses are moving in? New or existing? (30 points)
- Jobs (24 points)
- Jobs for East Siders, not job-hoppers from other communities (19 points)
- What kinds of jobs will move in? What experience will you need for these jobs? (10 points)
- Adequate training to fill jobs that are brought in (5 points)

¹⁰ One Spanish speaking resident participated in this group as well. The Spanish speaking facilitator for this meeting had to leave the meeting early for personal reasons.

II. HOUSING-new

TOTAL – 71 points

- How many houses will be torn down? Will they be replaced? Where? (How will we keep residents from moving from the East Side?) (25 points)
- Affordable housing a concern: Will new housing be affordable to current residents? (15 points)
- Housing (esp. new town homes on Maryland/Johnson Pkwy): How much of PCI will be residential? How much demolished? Affordable. **(12 points)**
- Medium density housing (9 points)
- Integrate housing and retail and new school (7 points)
- Alleys cause too much trouble – don't build them in new developments – Clean up what's already here (3 points)

III. THE CORRIDOR

TOTAL – 29 points

- Will the Corridor actually happen? (15 points)
- Cosmetic requirements for businesses (4 points)
- 3M museum/Hamms museum/Winter carnival museum/Whirlpool museum (3 points)
- Parking (for .../meter) **(4 points)**
- Ripple effects on Dayton's Bluff and Mounds Park neighborhoods. What will be left for these communities – \$, resources (3 points)

IV. GREEN SPACE

TOTAL – 26 points

- Park-like atmosphere (6 points)
- Water management adequate? (5 points)
- Tree buffers (1 point)
- How does it fit in with Swede Hollow Park? (1 point)
- All green concerns all together – Likes more green (parks?) (7 points)
- Ames Lake – Phalen Corridor Environmental effect/impact on this? (3 points)
- Restoration of Ames Creek from south end of Lake Phalen to Mississippi River? Currently underground. Could be a good water feature/amenity to restore. (3 points)

V. THE BOULEVARD

TOTAL – 24 points

- Traffic → How will it effect existing neighborhood? Will there be a lot of noise? (20 points)
- 35 mph enforceable? (4 points)

Several other categories included comments that were of interest to group participants that were not among the top five.

INDUSTRY

TOTAL – 16 points

- Community center at Stroh property (4 points)
- Do businesses approve plan? (6 points)
- RE: Stroh – historic museum of brewing/micro brewery (6 points)

PROCESS

TOTAL – 13 points

- Go to people to inform and gather info. [They] Don't read papers, etc. (6 points)
- How and how much of is general public approving? (1 point)
- Community development: PCI not being representative /comprehensive of people of color's point of view. More recognition/value of the voices (even though a few only) → need [to encourage] having PCI being more representative. (6 points)

COMMERCIAL

TOTAL – 3 points

- Highlight retail (3 points)

D5: Comparison to Previous Study

With these findings listed above, it is possible to consider how they compare to those findings for District 5 found in the Neighborhood Meetings Report:

Neighborhood Meetings – D5		Big Community Meeting – D5
<u>Priority Discussion Categories</u>		<u>Categories</u>
1.	Employment	Employment
2.	Green space	Housing
3.	Boulevard	Corridor
4.	Corridor	Green Space
5.	Industry	Boulevard

These findings indicate that EMPLOYMENT remains as the #1 priority for District 5 residents. The most impressive change is HOUSING which was formerly priority number eight, and now has moved up to number two. This may be due to the increasing interest in housing issues as the reality of the Phalen Boulevard and other development issues become closer to reality. The priorities of the CORRIDOR, GREEN SPACE, and the BOULEVARD remain in the top five, while INDUSTRY (issues related to the design of industrial sites) moves out of the top five to the next position down. Note that there may have been differences in the populations that attended the Neighborhood Meetings and the Big Community Meetings. These differences may have also influenced the change in these priorities.

Top Five Independent Comments for Hmong Groups

Each of the three meetings did have a session facilitated in Hmong, ranging in size from three to eight residents. The following comments generated the greatest number of points from the three groups. Also, at least one comment from each meeting is listed in this set of comments. While this may not represent the opinions of the entire Hmong community, it at least gives PCI developers a hint to what this group of residents finds important to East Side development and the Phalen Corridor Initiative.

1. We need to educate the Hmong population in the East Side about the project: What, where, why when?
Special session for the Hmong.

16 points. Category – PROCESS

2. Up to what specific area/street that will be affected by the project?

16 points. Category – CORRIDOR

3. If begin relocated/moved, will you find a new home/pay for it? What about the people who rent?

12 points. Category – HOUSING (new)

4. Housing (esp. new town-homes on Maryland/Johnson Pkwy) How much of PCI will be residential? How much demolished? Affordable?

12 points. Category – HOUSING (new)

5. Like to walk to work.

10 points. Category – INDUSTRY

Most interesting is that the two comments with the greatest number of points are related to the need and want for more information about PCI. While not included in the list above, the following comment from a Hmong participant may express this sentiment more clearly: “PCI [is] not being representative/comprehensive of people of color’s point of view. Even though [we are] a few only, we need [to encourage] having PCI being more representative.”¹¹ Followed these are two concerns about housing, especially new housing and what impact the changes might effect on renters and issues of affordability. Finally, the comment about walking to work, while coded “Industry,” really relates both to the location of future manufacturing facilities and the proximity of jobs – consistently an issue of interest among Hmong residents throughout the consultation process.

¹¹ PCI continues to seek more effective means of consulting with all East Side communities, including people of color. Ideas that will help to facilitate better communication are very welcome: (651)772-6220

Summary for All Consulted Areas

To demonstrate the results of this report, the chart below lists all of the categories, the number of priority points each category received per district, and the total number of priority points for the category. Following is a table that served as the source of data for the chart.

Chart 1: Big Community Meeting Results

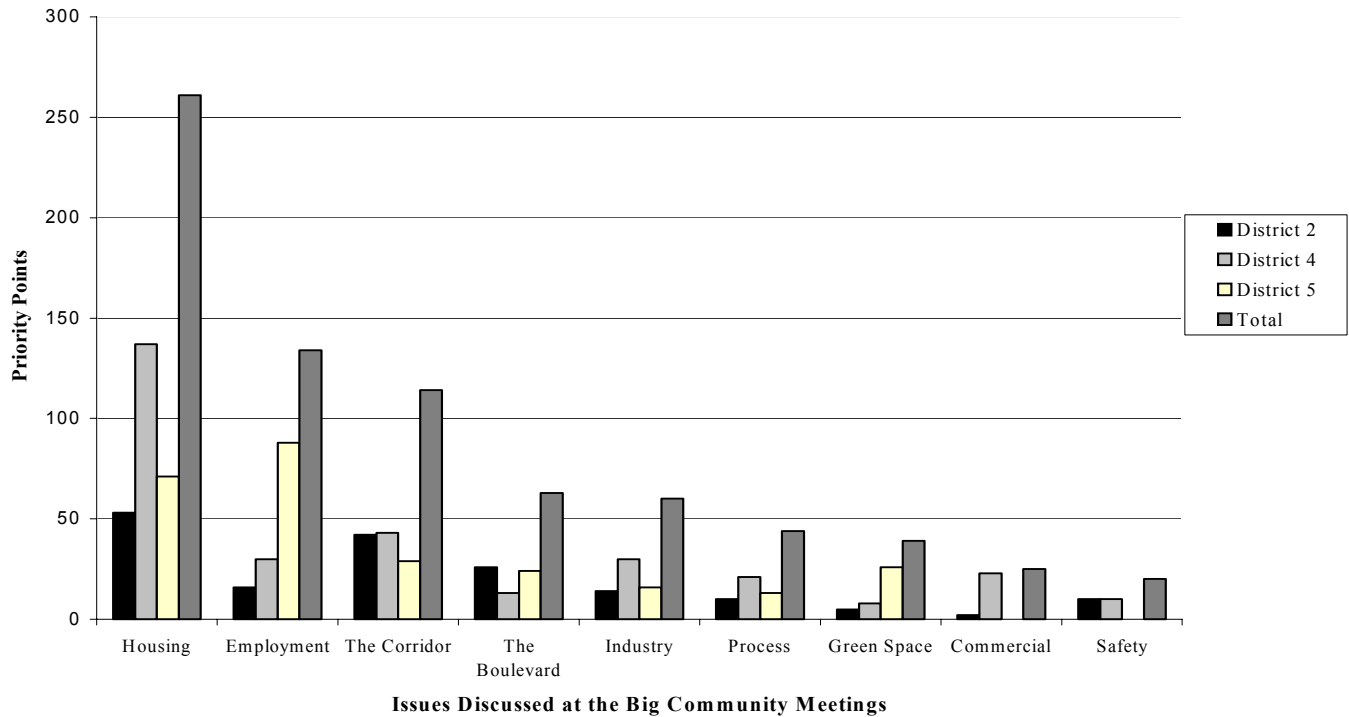


Table 1: Big Community Meetings – Priority Points

	District 2	District 4	District 5	Total
Housing	53	137	71	261
Employment	16	30	88	134
The Corridor	42	43	29	114
The Boulevard	26	13	24	63
Industry	14	30	16	60
Process	10	21	13	44
Green Space	5	8	26	39
Commercial	2	23	0	25
Safety	10	10	0	20

One can see in the table above that the category that scored the highest number of points overall is at the top. The remaining categories are ordered in numerical sequence based on the overall totals. This allows one to examine the order of the categories per district with the total. To begin, let us look at District 2.

District 2		Overall	
1.	Housing	1.	Housing
2.	The Corridor	2.	Employment
3.	The Boulevard	3.	The Corridor
4.	Employment	4.	The Boulevard
5.	Industry	5.	Industry

With this comparison, one see that there is no loss of categories, only a reordering. This allows one to infer that design of the CORRIDOR and the BOULEVARD may be more important to District 2 residents, both of which are listed higher than in the overall results. Also issues of EMPLOYMENT may be less important here than in the other planning districts.

District 4		Overall	
1.	Housing	1.	Housing
2.	The Corridor	2.	Employment
3.	Employment	3.	The Corridor
4.	Industry	4.	The Boulevard
5.	Process	5.	Industry

In the case of District 4, a greater disparity exists between the district's interests in comparison to the overall results. Looking at this data from District 4's perspective, their residents may be a bit more interested in the overall design in the development initiative (THE CORRIDOR) and are especially interested in the PROCESS that is used to communicate the plans. Linked to this is a slightly greater interest in the industrial development (INDUSTRY) associated with PCI. Referring back to the comments, one can see that this is probably associated with District 4's interest in the Stroh property.

District 5		Overall	
1.	Employment	1.	Housing
2.	Housing	2.	Employment
3.	The Corridor	3.	The Corridor
4.	Green Space	4.	The Boulevard
5.	The Boulevard	5.	Industry

Again viewing this from the perspective of the district's interests, EMPLOYMENT may a more pressing issue than HOUSING. It is interesting that the design and/or redevelopment of the industrial sites is not as high a priority. Rather, the area residents' of District 5 may be more interested in GREEN SPACE.

Finally, is a consideration of the overall results from this report in comparison to the overall results from the Neighborhood Meetings Report, completed in December 1998. This comparison offers a glimpse at how, or if, East Siders are thinking differently about PCI.

Neighborhood Meetings Report Results

1. Employment
2. Corridor
3. Industry
4. Green Space
5. Housing

6. Boulevard
7. Process
8. Training
9. Transit
10. Commercial
11. Safety

Big Community Meetings Results

1. Housing
2. Employment
3. The Corridor
4. The Boulevard
5. Industry

6. Process
7. Green Space
8. Commercial
9. Safety

Beginning with review of the top five categories, HOUSING moved from the #5 priority in the Neighborhood Report to the #1 priority. This is the most significant indicator that has changed in the overall analysis of these results. The reason for this change is probably due to:

- Increased knowledge of PCI,
- The Big Community Meetings' direct discussions on housing,
- Perceived implications of this issue for individual homeowners,
- Differences in the population that participated in these two series of events

EMPLOYMENT remains strong, moving from #1 in the earlier report to the #2 priority. The category relating to the overall development (CORRIDOR) also moves down only one place. Interest in the BOULEVARD may be growing as it moves into the top five. This is most likely due to the recent passage of the Environmental Impact Statement, suggesting that road construction could begin in the near future. And while INDUSTRY remains in the top five, GREEN SPACE slips out of the top five from #4 to #7. While this change infers a potential drop in interest, it may actually be the result of growing interest in other areas (HOUSING, BOULEVARD) while this one remained constant.

The most notable observation regarding the remaining categories is the notably absence of TRANSIT and TRAINING. These categories were either not addressed by participants in this most recent set of meetings at all, or were addressed but received no priority points. PROCESS actually appears to have moved up one priority place¹², while COMMERCIAL and SAFETY seem to have simply taken up the slack left in the absence of TRANSIT and TRAINING.

¹² This may be the result of the interest among Hmong participant in this area, and because their points were doubled in value to purposefully emphasize their concerns.

Implications for the Development Strategy

District Level Consistency and Change

The most notable result of this report is that the priorities appear to have remained relatively consistent at the district level. The district to district comparisons made between the data from this report to the data from the Neighborhood Meetings Report indicate that, for the most part, residents are thinking the same way they were last year. This needs to be qualified with the substantial growth of interest in the area of HOUSING.

The most significant change at the district level is that District 2 and District 5 appear to be significantly more interested in issues of HOUSING: District 2 in retaining their existing housing, District 5 in the impacts that new housing may have on existing residents. To solidify this point, District 4 participants allocated more points to the category of HOUSING than any district gave to any category. The most significant drop of interest may be in the category of GREEN SPACE in both District 2 and District 4. This does not imply that this is GREEN SPACE can be disregarded. It may simply mean that participants are dedicating more attention to HOUSING and other issues at this time.

East Side Consistency and Change

When the cumulative results for all three districts are assembled, calculated, and compared to the Neighborhood Report Results, the consistency of the priorities begins to wane. As stated earlier, HOUSING may have taken a major jump from #5 to #1. Unlike in the district level analysis, issues related to the BOULEVARD appear to be drawing more attention. And just as stated at the district level, GREEN SPACE may be receiving less attention for the time being.

Next Step

As stated at the beginning of this report, the Big Community Meetings were held to consult with community residents on the land-use plans of the Phalen Corridor Initiative. Some of these statements will be used to influence the final draft of the *Phalen Corridor Initiative Development Strategy*¹³ that will detail the specifics of the land-use plan. Appendix II was compiled specifically to provide planners with a list of the questions/comments that they may address from District 2's, District 4's, and District 5's top five independent comments.

The executive summary of the final draft of this report was sent to East Side residents who attended the meetings and provided their addresses, as well as for the planning district councils 2, 4, and 5. The final draft of the Development Strategy will be presented to a smaller set of area residents during the Summer 1999, and then brought before the City Council early Fall 1999 for approval.

¹³ This document is being drafted by the City of Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development.

APPENDIX I

Ideas for Facilitating Small Groups

Intro: A draft version of the Phalen Corridor Initiative Development Strategy is being presented at this meeting. The Development Strategy outlines land-use plans and design principles along the future Phalen Boulevard including areas for light industry, housing, green space/public institutions, and commerce. Your responsibility as a facilitator is to see that all people who wish to express an opinion are given the opportunity to do so. You also are to make sure that their opinions are recorded. During this process, it is recommended that you remain as neutral as possible.

Recording Group Comments: You will be provided with an easel, flip chart and markers to record group members' comments. If you would like, you may assign someone from the group to write down the group comments.

Group Guidelines: It is a good idea to present some guidelines to the group before beginning the discussion. It is recommended that you provide the following guidelines for your discussion group members:

- "Please limit your comments to 3 minutes or less." (You don't want one or two people monopolizing the discussion.)
- "Please do not interrupt if someone else is speaking. And if you do not agree with someone, signal that you are interested in presenting a counter opinion."
- "We ask that you please stick to the topic at hand by discussing issues that are related to the land use-plans along the Phalen Corridor."

All voices are important: Make a conscious effort to draw out those who are quieter – gently encourage them to speak.

Use Your Time Wisely: You have 30 minutes to address the questions below with your group and summarize your discussion. You may want to think about how much time you would like to spend on each question. You may even need to push the group to get through the questions. Also, don't let the group talk only about personal issues - my house, my business, etc.

Dealing with Unclear Ideas/Conflict Management: Try to summarize what a group member has said if you believe that others (or you) may not understand his or her point. You also may want to summarize both sides of an issue if a disagreement arises.

****Wrap-up**:** Please use the final 5 minutes of your time together as a “wrap-up” session with the group by producing a list of your five most important items. **Instructions:** Have each person choose three discussion items that they think were most important from what you wrote on the flip chart. Have them score these three items: 3 being most important, 1 being least. Write down the scores next to the item on the flip chart. Once all have given you their scores, add them up and find the top 5.

Reporting to Larger Group: Note that you will be asked to summarize your group's discussion when we bring all the small groups back together.

The Small Group Session

1. Introduction to your group 2 mins.

Topic: Draft version of the Phalen Corridor Initiative Development Strategy

What is this? It is a draft document detailing land-use plans and design principles along the future Phalen Boulevard including areas for light industry, housing, green space and public institutions, and commerce.

- Draft means that no final decisions have been made.
- Your ideas are needed help make these final decisions.
- Facilitator's responsibility: Make sure you get a chance to express your opinions and to make sure your ideas get written down.
- Phalen Corridor staff and city planners will then take your ideas and use them to finalize this land-use plan.
- This group we will be talking about the _____ area of the Phalen Corridor.

2. Provide discussion guidelines 2 mins.

"Please limit your comments to 3 minutes or less."

"Please do not interrupt if someone else is speaking. And if you do not agree with someone, signal that you are interested in presenting a counter opinion."

"We ask that you please stick to the topic at hand by discussing issues that are related to the land use-plans along the Phalen Corridor."

3. Questions 20 mins.

- Do you have any initial questions?
- Did you understand the presentation? Are you clear about what we are talking about?
- What do you **like** about the land-use plan?
- What **don't you like** about the land-use plan?
- What is missing? Are there any changes you would like to make to this land use plan?

Note: City planners and PCI staff (i.e., the presenters) will be walking around the room to answer technical questions. Some group members may also be very knowledgeable.

4. Wrap-up 6 mins.

APPENDIX II

Top Five Independent Comments from D2, D4 and D5 – Divided into Categories

HOUSING

1. How many houses will be torn down? Will they be replaced? Where? (How will we keep residents from moving from the East Side?) 25 points. Category – HOUSING (new) D5
2. Concern about town homes – replacing houses – will there be other houses. 21 points. Category – HOUSING (new) D4
3. Housing changes? Those moving be able to find new housing - affordable? What plan for low income? 18 points. Category – HOUSING (new) D4
4. Housing: Why tear down housing when you could just build farther back? 10 points. Category – HOUSING (existing) D2
5. Houses taken away on Newcomb/E. 7th. What about long term homeowners? 15 points. Category – HOUSING (existing) D4

EMPLOYMENT

1. Jobs 24 points. Category – EMPLOYMENT D5
2. Jobs in the area - e.g., information technology [jobs], good pay – arrange for training for those jobs other than manufacturing jobs. 10 points. Category – EMPLOYMENT D2
3. Jobs for East Siders, not job-hoppers from other communities. 9 points. Category – EMPLOYMENT D5

THE CORRIDOR

1. Up to what specific area/street that will be affected by the project? 16 points. Category – CORRIDOR D4
2. Buffer areas: Don't want to look out back window and see plant. [Have them] set back [or have] park [buffers]. 10 points. Category – CORRIDOR D2
3. Johnson from 7th to Case needs up-grading. Include in project. Dumpy looking – poor housing & railroad bridge ugly. 10 points. Category – CORRIDOR D2

THE BOULEVARD

1. Traffic → How will it effect existing neighborhood? Will there be a lot of noise? 20 points. Category – BOULEVARD D5
2. Phalen Blvd. A plus for traffic movement 10 points. Category – BOULEVARD D2

INDUSTRY

1. What businesses are moving in? New or existing? 30 points. Category – INDUSTRY D5
2. Like to walk to work 10 points. Category – INDUSTRY D2

PROCESS

1. We need to educate the Hmong population in the East Side about the project: What, where, why when? Special session for the Hmong. 16 points. Category – PROCESS D4